

Application No. 09/966,691

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10-34, as amended, are pending herein, claims 2, 3, 6, and 9 having been cancelled and the limitations thereof having been incorporated into amended claim 1. Claims 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10 have been amended for proper dependency owing to the cancellation of claims 2, 3, 6, and 9.

The specification has been amended to correct minor clerical errors.

Claims 4 and 5 have been amended to correct the term "dividing" therein.

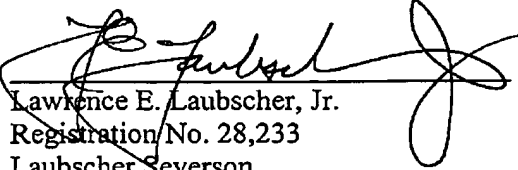
Claims 9-24 and 30-34 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Since the limitations of allowable claim 9 and all intervening claims have been incorporated into claim 1, claim 1 and all of the remaining claims which depend therefrom should now be in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration of the requirement to label Fig. 1 as "prior art" is courteously requested. The invention relates to a novel internal protocol for components of data switching equipment. The claims define a novel method of information exchange between components of a data switching node. The invention would be implemented by concrete components. Fig. 1 shows a general switching node functional architecture of prior art data switching equipment, the components of which do not implement the subject novel internal communications protocol. Fig. 1 also shows architecture of compliant data switching equipment, the components of which implement the proposed novel internal communications protocol. The invention does not materially change the general functional architecture of data switching equipment. Fig. 2 shows exemplary components of an exemplary prior art implementation, prior art components which implement the general functional architecture shown in Fig. 1. Figs. 3 to 6 show exemplary components of an exemplary compliant implementation, compliant components which also implement the general functional architecture shown in Fig. 1.

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Allowance of claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10-34 is courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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